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**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Kremmling Field Office
P.O. Box 68
Kremmling, CO 80459**

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

A. Background

BLM Office: Kremmling Lease/Serial/Case File No.: N/A

Number: BLM-CO-120-2010-0049-CX

Proposed Action Title/Type: Grand County Tree Removal

Location of Proposed Action: Grand County Roads 3, 34 and 20 (BLM portions)

Description of Proposed Action:

Grand County is responsible for the maintenance and safety of its county roads. Due to the extreme situation of the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic, Grand County would be removing HAZARD trees along approximately 50 miles of Grand County maintained rights-of-way in the Williams Fork and Smith Mesa areas, starting in mid-September. BLM-administered land involved in the project is 10.6 acres. Grand County is planning on removing all hazard trees within 20 feet of the edge of the driving surface. A "hazard tree" is defined as any lodgepole pine tree that is five inches in diameter or greater whether green, infected or dead, as well as a dead tree of any other species that is located within 20 feet of the edge of the driving surface. Live spruces, aspen and other non-lodgepole species would not be removed.

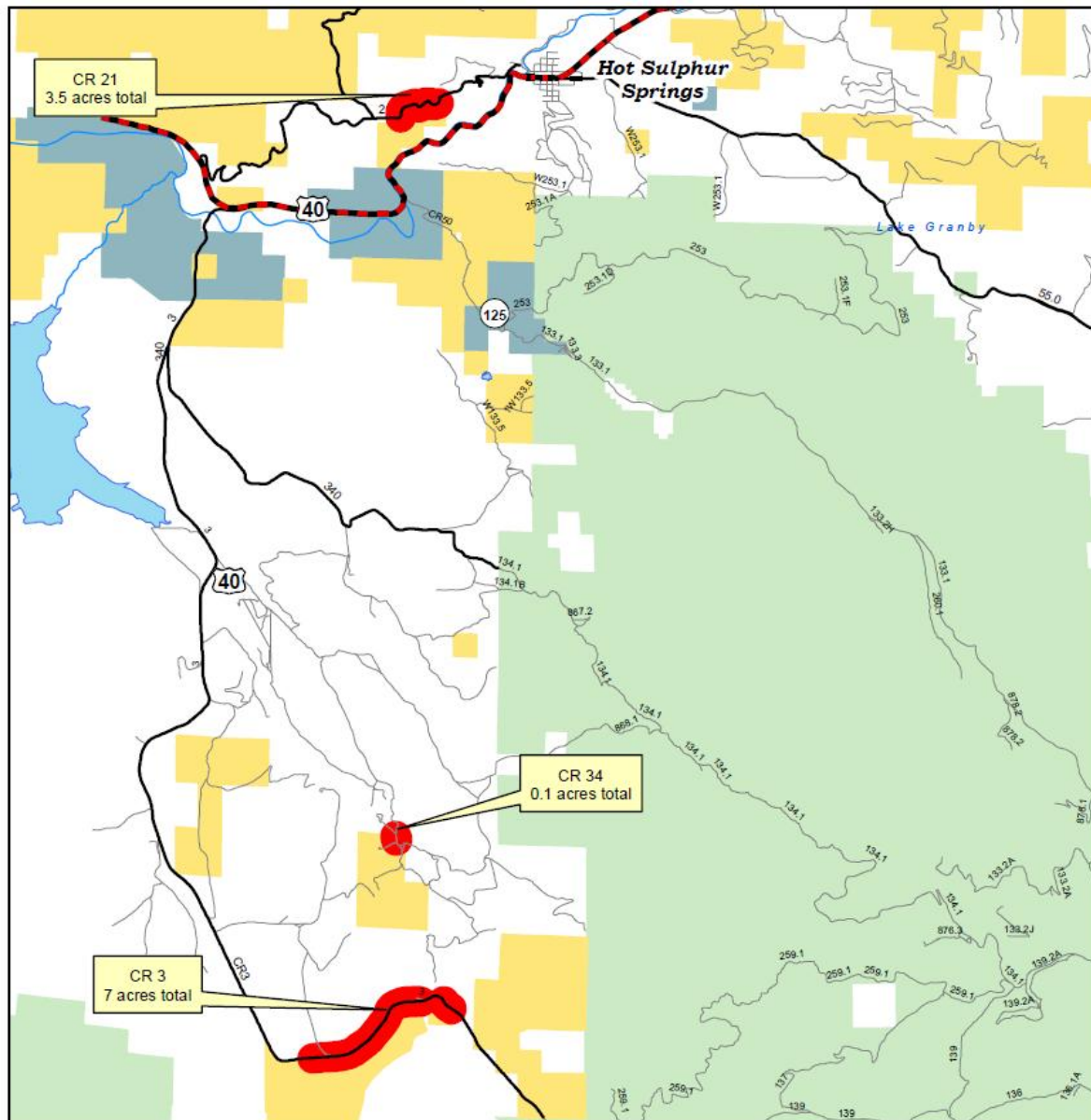
The trees that are within 20 feet of the driving surface of a county road need to be removed for the protection of roadway users and to ensure ingress/egress in times of emergency. Hazard trees are a threat to safety because they may fall on the roadway, possibly striking a roadway user or blocking the roadway, especially during an emergency such as a wildfire.

The trees will be mechanically removed by a feller-buncher and chipped. The materials would then be spread along the right-of-way up to three inches deep. If there is more than three inches of material, it would be disposed of at another location. The contract calls for the trees to be removed and hauled off.

Design Features of the Proposed Action:

- Signs need to be posted along the county roads where tree removal is actively occurring warning the public of logging equipment and vehicles.
- No chips should be placed within 20 feet of a drainage.
- Equipment will not drive through any wetland areas.

2010 Grand County Roads Vegetation Treatment



1:101,939

0 0.3750.75 1.5 Miles

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data were compiled from various sources. This information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated without notification.

S. Valente 07/19/2010
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PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

Name of Plan: Kremmling Resource Management Plan (RMP), Record of Decision (ROD), Updated.

Date Approved: February 1999

Decision Number/Page: Transportation and Access, P.14, "Provide access to allow multiple use management of public lands.

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: The Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.9, Section C (8) "Salvaging dead or dying trees not to exceed 250 acres..." None of the following extraordinary circumstances in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, apply.

Extraordinary Circumstances	Yes	No
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety		X
2.2 Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		X
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102(2)(E)].		X
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
2.7 Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		X
2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		X
2.9 Violate a Federal Law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X
2.11 Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on		X

Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).		
2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		X

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

Name	Title	Area of Responsibility	Date Review Completed
Paula Belcher	Hydrologist	Soil, Water, Air & Riparian	8/30/2010
Bill B. Wyatt	Fire Archaeologist	Cultural Resources and Tribal Consultation	8/31/2010
Megan McGuire	Wildlife Biologist	T&E Species and Wildlife	8/16/10
Kenneth Belcher	Forester	Forestry	8/30/2010
Susan Cassel	Associate Field Manager	NEPA	8/31/2010

REMARKS:

Cultural Resources: A cultural inventory has been completed for fuels treatments along CR 3 on the seven acres of proposed treatment area, in 2004, with tribal consultation. No sites were located within the proposed project area. The number of trees identified for removal by Grand County is estimated to be fewer than 20 trees dispersed through BLM-administered lands. The proposed action does not constitute an undertaking. Since it is not a commercial harvest, tribal consultation was not initiated.

Forestry: Field review of the public lands potentially affected by the proposed action revealed that there are timber resources present, especially where CR 21 passes through BLM administered public land. There are a smaller number of trees on public lands that may be affected along CR 34 and CR 3. The action qualifies as a use of timber for which a free-use permit may be issued. The applicant for such a permit must be the governmental unit involved, in this case the Grand County Dept. of Road & Bridge, and not the individual who is representing the governmental unit.

B. Signature

Authorizing Official:____/s/ David Stout_____ Date: _____8/31/2010_____
(Signature)

Name:____David Stout_____
Title:____Field Manager_____

Contact Person

Susan Cassel
P O Box 68
Kremmling, CO 80459
970-724-3002

DECISION RECORD
CX # BLM-CO-120-2010-0049-CX

DECISION: It is my decision to authorize the Proposed Action as described in the attached CX.

This decision is in compliance with the Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and the Clean Water Act. This decision is also in conformance with the LUP and other applicable laws, regulations and policies.

This action is listed in the Department Manual as an action that may be categorically excluded. I have evaluated the action and have determined that it does not represent an extraordinary circumstance and is, therefore, categorically excluded from further environmental analysis.

RATIONALE: The proposed action to cut hazard trees along county roads was chosen to provide safety on transportation routes throughout the county. Due to the pine beetle epidemic, the dead trees will eventually fall and could block roadways or worse yet, hit a vehicle driving down the road.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: /s/ David Stout

DATE SIGNED: 8/31/2010